



# Pangolin

## Why in News?

A new report by [TRAFFIC](#) and [World Wide Fund for Nature-India](#) revealed that 1,203 pangolins were poached for illegal wildlife trade in India from 2018-2022.

- These were recovered in **342 seizure incidents across 24 states and one Union territory of India**. The highest number of seizure incidents and pangolins seized were in Odisha.

## What are the Characteristics of Pangolin?

- **About:**
  - **Pangolins are nocturnal mammals that dig burrows and feed on ants and termites**, and play a vital role in [ecosystem management](#), mostly in **aerating and adding moisture to the soil**.
  - Pangolins are known for their unique appearance. They have **scales made of keratin that cover their entire body**.
    - When threatened, they **can roll into a ball to protect themselves**.



- **Pangolin Species:** There are eight species of pangolin:
  - **4 Species in Africa:** Black-bellied pangolin, White-bellied pangolin, Giant Ground pangolin and Temminck's Ground pangolin.

- **4 Species in Asia:** Indian pangolin, Philippine pangolin, Sunda pangolin and the Chinese pangolin.
- **Habitat:**
  - It is adaptable to a wide range of habitats including **primary and secondary tropical forests, limestone and bamboo forests, grasslands** and agricultural fields.
  - The Indian Pangolin is found across the Indian subcontinent; **Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam also have the presence of Chinese pangolin.**
- **Threats:**
  - Once known to be found in large numbers, **its population is rapidly declining in its range due to habitat loss and rampant poaching** for its **skin, scales, and meat.**
  - Pangolins are **among the most trafficked wild mammals**, globally, traded mostly in **Asia**, where their **scales are considered to be medicinal** and their meat a delicacy.
- **Protection Status:**
  - In the red list of animals published by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, Indian Pangolin is listed in the **Endangered (EN) category.**
    - The Chinese pangolin has been listed as **“critically endangered”.**
  - In India, pangolins, both **Indian and Chinese**, are protected under **Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972** that prohibits its **hunting, trade or any other form of utilisation.**
- All pangolin species are listed in [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species \(CITES\) Appendix I.](#)

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q. Consider the following animals (2021):**

1. Hedgehog
2. Marmot
3. Pangolin

**To reduce the chance of being captured by predators which of the above organisms rolls up/roll up and protects/ protects its/their vulnerable parts?**

- (a) 1 and 2  
(b) 2 only  
(c) 3 only  
(d) 1 and 3

**Ans: (d)**

**Source: DTE**